

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KABUL 03419 011444Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY  
CINCPAC

S E C R E T KABUL 3419

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT Z AF  
SUBJECT: SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS ON AFGHANISTAN'S COMMUNIST  
REVOLUTION

1. WAHT THE BRITISH FOUGHT TO PREVENT FOR OVER ONE HUNDRED  
YEARS -- AND WHAT THE SHAH HAS REGARDED AS ONE OF HIS  
WORST NIGHTMARES -- HAS FINALLY OCCURRED. DIRECT RUSSIAN  
INFLUENCE APPEARS TO HAVE MOVED SOUTH OF THE OXUS AND THE  
HINDU KUSH. WE DO NOT YET KNOW WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTITUDE  
THE DEGREE OF SOVIET ORIENTATION OF AFGHANISTAN'S NEW COMMUNIST  
REGIME. ARE WE DEALING WITH A BULGARIA, A YUGOSLAVIA -- OR,  
PERHAPS, WITH AN EVENTUAL AFGHAN S.S.R.? ACCORDING TO ITS PAST  
TRACK RECORD, HOWEVER, THE VICTORIOUS KHALQ PARTY SEEMS  
TO BE PRO-SOVIET, A SITUATION WHICH MUST PROVE ALARMING TO  
AFGHANISTAN'S OTHER NEIGHBORS, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA,  
IRAN, AND PAKISTAN.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 03419 011444Z

2. COULD THIS COMMUNIST "PUTSCH" HAVE BEEN PREVENTED?  
IN OUR OPINION, THE FAILURE OF THE DAOUDIST REVOLUTION OF  
1973 IS THE MAIN FACTOR THAT SEALED THE DOOM OF THE  
PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT. THE SLOW, INEFFECTIVE PACE OF THE  
DAOUDIST REGIME HAD FRUSTRATED EVEN THE NON-COMMUNIST  
ELITE HERE. ON THE EVE OF DAOUD'S DOWNFALL, IT WAS  
BECOMING CLEAR THAT HIS APPROACH WAS NOT GOING TO SOLVE

AFGHANISTAN'S OVERWHELMING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, ATTACK SOCIAL BACKWARDNESS, OR BUILD LASTING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. ALTHOUGH THE SHAH'S NIGGARDLINESS IN FOLLOWING THROUGH ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROMISES TO THE DAOUD REGIME BELIED THE SHAH'S OFF-STATED CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER HERE, IRANIAN AID FUNDS BEING DELIVERED FASTER THAN THE OBSORPTIVE CAPACITY OF THE CREAKY AFGHAN ADMINISTRATION WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE BEEN A SIGNIFICANT DETERMINANT OF EVENTS. THE PAKISTANI REGIMES OF BHUTTO AND ZIA PROVIDED VALUABLE POLITICAL ASSISTANCE TO DAOUD BY HELPING TO RELIEVE BILATERAL TENSIONS, BUT THAT INVESTMENT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MADE IN VAIN. THE NEW KHALQ LEADERSHIP CLEARLY WORKS CLOSELY WITH MANY IMPORTANT PUSHTUNISTAN NATIONALISTS. WE ALSO KNOW THAT THE SOVIETS, AS WELL AS THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN, HAD ALL OPPOSED THE RECENT AFGHAN-PAKISTANI DETENTE OVER THE PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE.

3. WAS THERE DIRECT SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN THE COUP? THE EVIDENCE IS SCANTY, BUT PLAUSIBLE. THERE APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN A MEETING -- SEEN BY AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL -- BETWEEN SOVIET OFFICIALS AND COUP OFFICERS BEHIND A TANK OUTSIDE THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON THE NIGHT OF APRIL 27. AN EYEWITNESS SAW A RUSSIAN, PRESUMABLY A MILITARY ADVISOR, DRESSED IN AN AFGHAN UNIFORM AND MANNING ONE OF THE REBEL TANKS WHICH ATTACKED KABUL AIRPORT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 03419 011444Z

JUDGING FROM THE SURGICAL SKILL OF THE NIGHTTIME AIRSTRIKES, WE THINK THERE IS GOOD REASON TO WONDER WHETHER SOVIET PILOTS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN FLYING THOSE MISSIONS. WHATEVER THEIR DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUP'S SUCCESS, THE SOVIETS HAVE GOOD REASON TO FEEL SATISFIED. THE COMMUNISTS QUICKLY PERCEIVED THAT THE RECENT DAOUDIST ATTACK AGAINST THE KHALQ LEADERSHIP THREATENED THE VERY SURVIVAL OF THEIR SUBVERSIVE POTENTIAL IN AFGHANISTAN. REACTING IMMEDIATELY AND DRAWING UPON WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN YEEARS OF PREPARATION AND PLANNING, THE COMMUNISTS WON THE DAY AND JUMPED FAR AHEAD OF WHAT HAD APPEARED TO BE A MORE CONSERVATIVE SOVIET POLITICAL TIME-TABLE FOR THIS REGION. WILL THE KHALQ REMAIN FAITHFULLY SOVIET, ACTING LIKE TODAY BULGARIA? WILL THEY HAVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO FIERCE AFGHAN NATIONALISM WHICH WILL GIVE THEM MORE OF A YUGOSLAV COLORATION? OR, IS IT POSSIBLE THAT AN AFGHAN S.S.R. MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE ABSORBED INTO THE SOVIET UNION? ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

4. ARE WE NOW IN THE EYE OF A HURRICANE? NOW THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE REVEALED THE TRUE NATURE OF THE COUP REGIME, WILL EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION ARISE? MANY OBSERVERS HERE THINK THAT

EVENTUALITY IS HIGHLY PROBABLE IN DEVOUT, TRADITIONALIST AFGHANISTAN. ALSO, THE MILITARY OFFICERS WHO HELPED IN THE COUP MAY NOT BE WINNING THEIR SHARE OF THE SPOILS. CAN ANY OPPOSITION OVERCOME THE TANKS AND WARPLANES OF THE NEW REGIME? A FEW OF THESE SAME OBSERVERS THINK THAT THE NEW REGIME'S ARMS WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO STEM AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERCOUP. ALSO, AS NOTED ABOVE, A CONCENTRATION OF DISGRUNTLED, NON-KHALQIST MILITARY OFFICERS (THE KHALQ HAS CLAIMED THAT 25 PERCENT OF THE OFFICER CORPS ARE EITHER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY, OR AT LEAST SYMPATHETIC TO IT) COULD DENY THE ARMS THEY CONTROL TO THE REGIME. ULTIMATELY, HOWEVER, THE USSR WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO LET THE FLEDGLING REGIME GO UNDER WITHOUT PROVIDING AS MUCH ASSISTANCE AS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PUT DOWN A DOMESTIC COUNTERCOUP -- OR TO DEAL WITH IRANIAN OR PAKISTANI INTERFERENCE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 KABUL 03419 011444Z

THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE OF 1968 CAN ALWAYS BE INVOKED AGAIN.

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## Message Attributes

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